

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06
COME-00 EB-08 LAB-04 SIL-01 INT-05 /079 W
-----058658 111206Z /13 10

R 101717Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY BONN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6643
INFO AMCONSUL BREMEN
AMCONSUL DUSSELDORF
AMCONSUL FRANKFURT
AMCONSUL MUNICH
AMCONSUL HAMBURG
AMCONSUL STUTTGART
USMISSION USBERLIN
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY DUBLIN
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

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USEEC ALSO FOR EMBASSY

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: ELAB, GW
SUBJECT: THE LABOR SCENE - STRIKE SET FOR PART OF METAL
INDUSTRY; PRINTING INDUSTRY REMAINS UNEASY

REF: (A) BONN 04303; (B) BONN 04233

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SUMMARY: IG METALL EXECUTIVE BOARD IN FRANKFURT MET
MARCH 9 TO DISCUSS RESULTS OF THE STRIKE VOTES IN NORTH
RHINE-WESTPHALIA (NRW) AND NORTH BADEN-WUERTTEMBERG
(NBW) ON MARCH 7 AND 8. THEY APPROVED A STRIKE IN
NORTH BADEN-WUERTTEMBERG, WHICH PRESUMABLY WILL START
MARCH 15. NO STRIKE DATE FIXED YET FOR NORTH RHINE-
WESTPHALIA. EMPLOYERS IN THE METAL INDUSTRY HAVE

APPROACHED IG METALL HEADQUARTERS AND PROPOSED NEW TALKS. DISPUTE IN PRINTING INDUSTRY ALSO REMAINS UNSETTLED. SEARCH FOR A NEUTRAL MEDIATOR CONTINUES. END SUMMARY.

1. ON MARCH 9, IG METALL EXECUTIVE BOARD MET IN FRANKFURT TO CONSIDER STRIKE ACTION IN THE NRW AND NBW METAL INDUSTRY. THE BOARD UNANIMOUSLY ACCEPTED A PROPOSAL FROM THE NBW REGIONAL GROUP TO STRIKE BEGINNING MARCH 15. A DECISION WILL BE MADE AT A LATER DATE WHETHER OR NOT TO STRIKE IN NRW.

2. IN THE AFTERNOON OF MARCH 9, EMPLOYERS IN THE METAL INDUSTRY PROPOSED NEW TALKS IN ATTEMPT TO AVOID A STRIKE. THESE TALKS WILL BE HELD IN FRANKFURT MARCH 11 AT 11:00 A.M. THE CONFEDERATION OF GERMAN METAL EMPLOYERS' ASSOCIATIONS (GESAMTMETALL) IN COLOGNE EMPHASIZED THAT "BETWEEN THE STRIKE VOTE AND THE START OF A STRIKE ONE SHOULD MAKE A LAST EFFORT TO PEACEFULLY SOLVE THE WAGE CONFLICT THROUGH RENEWED NEGOTIATIONS." ALTHOUGH FORMAL NEGOTIATIONS CANNOT TAKE PLACE BETWEEN THE TWO HEAD-QUARTER GROUPS, THE REGIONAL IG METALL NEGOTIATORS WILL BE AVAILABLE BEGINNING MID-MORNING MARCH 11 TO REENTER NEGOTIATIONS SHOULD ANY GROUNDS FOR AGREEMENT EMERGE.

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3. IN THE PRINTERS' DISPUTE, NEWSPAPER PUBLISHERS YESTERDAY CALLED ON THE PRINTERS UNION (IG DRUCK) IMMEDIATELY TO STOP THE STRIKES REMAINING AGAINST A FEW NEWSPAPERS. THEY THREATENED TO IMPOSE ANOTHER WIDE-SPREAD LOCKOUT SHOULD THE UNION CONTINUE THESE SELECTIVE STRIKES. THE SEARCH FOR A NEUTRAL MEDIATOR CONTINUES, BUT NO ONE POTENTIALLY ACCEPTABLE TO BOTH SIDES HAS YET EMERGED.

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4 COMMENT: THE UNION STRATEGY IS TO INCREASE THE
PRESSURE ON THE METAL EMPLOYERS IN BADEN-WUERTTEMBERG
IN THE HOPE THAT THIS RELATIVELY AFFLUENT REGION OF
THE INDUSTRY WILL AGREE TO AN ACCEPTABLE WAGE HIKE
WHICH CAN BE USED TO INFLUENCE OTHER REGIONS. IN
ADDITION, THERE ARE FEWER IG METALL MEMBERS THERE
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WHICH WILL MAKE THE STRIKE LESS COSTLY TO THE UNION.
THE SEVERAL DAYS REMAINING BEFORE MARCH 15 PROVIDE
TIME FOR ADDITIONAL NEGOTIATIONS WHICH COULD HEAD OFF A
STRIKE. HOWEVER, EMPLOYERS MAY STILL REFUSE TO OFFER
THE 5 PERCENT PLUS WHICH SEEMS NECESSARY TO AVOID A
STRIKE. IF THAT HAPPENS AND THE STRIKE BEGINS ON
SCHEDULE, SOME UNION SOURCES BELIEVE THAT IT COULD
LAST FOR A COUPLE OF WEEKS AND COULD SPREAD TO OTHER
REGIONS.

THE PRINTERS SITUATION REMAINS UNRESOLVED AND NO NEARER

TO SOLUTION. ANOTHER RASH OF NEWSPAPER PLANT
CLOSINGS COULD ERUPT AT ANY TIME. CRITICISM OF THE
TACTICS OF THE PRINTERS UNION LEADERSHIP IS FAIRLY WIDE-
SPREAD AMONG DGB UNION OFFICIALS ALTHOUGH THE POSTURE
TAKEN PUBLICLY IS ONE OF COMPLETE SOLIDARITY. ONE
DGB UNION LEADER SAID THAT IF THERE IS A CHANCE TO
MAKE A MISTAKE, THE PRINTERS UNION WILL MAKE IT.
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Message Attributes

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